

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
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P 240844Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4273

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 ISLAMABAD 1986

EXDIS

FOR THE SECRETARY FROM BYROADE

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PK, PFOR

SUBJECT: YOUR FEBRUARY 26 MEETING WITH PRIME MINISTER BHUTTO

1. I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN MY IMPRESSIONS OF BHUTTO'S MOOD AND SOME OF THE THINGS WHICH WILL BE FOREMOST ON HIS MIND WHEN HE MEETS WITH YOU IN NEW YORK THIS WEEK. I HOPE THEY CAN USEFULLY SUPPLEMENT THE EXCELLENT BRIEFING MATERIAL I KNOW THE DESK ALWAYS PRODUCES FOR YOU.

2. YOU'LL FIND BHUTTO IN A RELATIVELY CONFIDENT MOOD INSOFAR AS HIS IMMEDIATE FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC PROBLEMS ARE CONCERNED. ON THE INTERNATIONAL FRONT, HE CAN TAKE CONSIDERABLE SATISFACTION FROM THE EXCELLENT RELATIONSHIP HE HAS ESTABLISHED WITH THE MUSLIM STATES AND FROM THE SUCCESS PAKISTAN HAS ACHIEVED UNDER HIS LEADERSHIP OVER THE PAST FOUR YEARS IN RESTORING AND ENHANCING ITS EMINENT POSITION IN THE THIRD WORLD. THE PAKISTANIS WERE PARTICULARLY PLEASED IN THIS CONTEXT WITH THEIR VICTORY OVER INDIA IN THE FIGHT FOR A UN SECURITY COUNCIL SEAT, AND BHUTTO MAY WANT TO THANK YOU FOR OUR SUPPORT IN THE PAK EFFORT.

3. CLOSER TO HOME, BHUTTO CONTINUES TO HAVE HIS PROBLEMS, OF COURSE. RELATIONS WITH AFGHANISTAN ARE CONFIDENTIAL

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STILL COOL AND HE DOES NOT SEE ANY DRAMATIC IMPROVEMENT

AS LONG AS DAOUD CONTINUES TO PUSH THE PUSHTUNISTAN ISSUE. HE PROBABLY DOES NOT SEE ANY IMMEDIATE PROSPECT FOR FURTHER MOVEMENT TOWARD NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS WITH INDIA -- HIS READING, WHICH I SHARE, IS THAT INDIA IS CURRENTLY DOING MOST OF THE STONEWALLING -- BUT HE HAS NO REAL PROBLEM IN LIVING WITH THE PRESENT SITUATION. HE HAS BEEN CAREFUL TO AVOID CRITICIZING MRS. GANDHI FOR THE EMERGENCY AND HAS KEPT THE MEDIA FAIRLY MUTED ON THIS ISSUE. HE'S ALSO BEHAVED REMARKABLY RESPONSIBLY IN THE SENSITIVE AREA OF INDO-BANGLADESH RELATIONS. LIKE EVERY OTHER RESPONSIBLE PAKISTANI HE CONTINUES, OF COURSE, TO BE APPREHENSIVE ABOUT INDIA'S ULTIMATE INTENTIONS IN THE SUBCONTINENT AND TO WORRY ABOUT THE INCREASING DISPARITY BETWEEN ITS ARMED FORCES AND PAKISTAN'S. BUT I DON'T THINK THAT HE SHARES THE ALARMIST VIEW SOME OF HIS FOREIGN OFFICE PEOPLE PUT OUT ABOUT THE IMMINENCE OF AN INDIAN MOVE IN PAKISTAN'S DIRECTION.

4. BHUTTO IS IN GOOD SHAPE DOMESTICALLY. HE'S BEEN SPENDING MORE TIME RECENTLY MENDING HIS POLITICAL FENCES. HE WILL PROBABLY CALL FOR GENERAL ELECTIONS LATE THIS FALL, AND IN PREPARATION IS SOLIDIFYING HIS AUTHORITY AND POSITION. THE OPPOSITION REMAINS DIVIDED AND FRUSTRATED. BHUTTO IS STILL PAKISTAN'S MOST SKILLFUL AND POPULAR POLITICIAN, BUT HIS TENDENCY TOWARD OVER-KILL IN HIS DEALINGS WITH HIS OPPONENTS REFLECTING HIS BASICALLY AUTHORITARIAN BENT HAS COME INCREASINGLY TO THE FORE OVER THE PAST SEVERAL MONTHS. THIS IS IN MANY WAYS REGRETTABLE SINCE FOR ALL THE FRUSTRATIONS FELT IN COUNTRIES LIKE PAKISTAN HE CONTINUES TO COMMAND A GOOD DEGREE OF POPULAR SUPPORT, ESPECIALLY IN THE RURAL AREAS. THE PENCHANT FOR AUTHORITARIAN RULE IS A CONSTANT IN PAKISTAN POLITICS, HOWEVER, AND BHUTTO IS FOLLOWING A WELL WORN PATH IN ADOPTING THE POLICIES HE HAS.

5. BHUTTO'S STRONG STANDING AT HOME DOES NOT REFLECT ANY SUBSTANTIAL IMPROVEMENT ON THE PAKISTAN ECONOMIC FRONT, HOWEVER. THE COUNTRY CONTINUES TO FACE

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VERY SERIOUS PROBLEMS, PARTICULARLY IN THE BALANCE OF PAYMENTS AND CAPITAL MOBILIZATION AREAS. INFLATION HAS ABATED SOMEWHAT, BUT REMAINS A SOURCE OF CONSIDERABLE DISCONTENT. BHUTTO, ALWAYS THE CONSUMMATE POLITICAL ANIMAL, PREFERS TO FOCUS ON POLITICAL MANEUVER RATHER THAN HARD ECONOMIC CHOICES, AND THIS WILL BECOME INCREASINGLY THE CASE AS THE ELECTION DRAWS NEAR. I'M HOPEFUL THAT ONCE HE HAS RECEIVED A RENEWED MANDATE

HE WILL TURN HIS ATTENTION TO THE ECONOMIC ISSUES HE SHOULD BE FOCUSING ON, AND FROM THIS POINT OF VIEW THE SOONER THE VOTING TAKES PLACE THE BETTER OFF PAKISTAN IS LIKELY TO BE.

6. BHUTTO WILL ARRIVE IN NEW YORK WELL-DISPOSED TOWARD THE U.S. BUT WITH INCREASING CONCERNS OVER THE DIRECTION OF OUR FOREIGN POLICY. ON THE POSITIVE SIDE, BHUTTO CONTINUES TO HAVE CONSIDERABLE RESPECT AND ADMIRATION FOR THE U.S. AND FIRMLY BELIEVES WE SHARE A COMITY OF INTERESTS IN SOUTH ASIA. HE IS ALSO PROUD OF WHAT HE SEES AS HIS CLOSE AND WARM PERSONAL

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 ISLAMABAD 1986

EXDIS

RELATIONSHIP WITH BOTH THE PRESIDENT AND YOURSELF. HE'S GENERALLY PLEASED WITH THE SUBSTANCE AND THE TONE OF PRESENT US-PAK RELATIONS. THE NEWS THAT WE WOULD LET THE PAKISTAN AIR FORCE SEE THE A-7 WAS WELL RECEIVED, AND BHUTTO IS FOR THE MOST PART SATISFIED WITH THE DIRECTION OUR MILITARY SALES RELATIONSHIP IS TAKING, ALTHOUGH HE WOULD OBVIOUSLY LIKE TO SEE IT MOVE MORE QUICKLY AND WOULD ALSO PREFER THAT IT BE FURTHER LIBERALIZED. IN THIS CONTEXT HE WILL ALMOST CERTAINLY PRESS YOU FOR AN EARLY FAVORABLE DECISION ON AIRCRAFT SALES.

7. ON THE NEGATIVE SIDE, BHUTTO SHARES MANY OF THE CONCERNS YOU HAVE RECENTLY ENUNCIATED ABOUT AMERICA'S WORLD ROLE. HE HAS MADE THESE CONCERNS EVIDENT IN

DISCUSSIONS WITH ME AND VISITING AMERICAN LEADERS SUCH AS SENATOR MCGOVERN AND CONGRESSMAN DIGGS. SOME OF HIS REMARKS TO THEM CLOSELY PARALLELED THE APPROACH YOU TOOK A FEW WEEKS LATER IN YOUR SAN FRANCISCO SPEECH. BHUTTO HAS NO DOUBTS ABOUT THE DESIRES AND GOALS OF THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH. HE IS INCREASINGLY CONCERNED, HOWEVER, BY WHAT HE SEES AS CONGRESSIONAL MEDDLING IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND A QUASI-ISOLATIONIST TREND ON THE HILL. HE FEELS THAT CONGRESS IS TOO ANXIOUS TO FORCE ILL-ADVISED CHANGES IN U.S. FOREIGN POLICY BUT IS NOT WILLING OR ABLE TO ASSUME THE HEAVY BURDENS OF MAKING THE DIFFICULT DECISIONS THAT DAILY FACE THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH.

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8. THIS VIEW HAS BEEN RECENTLY STRENGTHENED BY CONGRESSIONAL ACTIONS ON ANGOLA: BHUTTO AND DIGGS HAD A SHARP EXCHANGE ON THIS ISSUE. IT HAS ALSO BEEN UNDERSCORED FOR HIM BY NEW AND THREATENED FURTHER RESTRICTIONS IN MILITARY SALES PROGRAMS. THESE HAVE AN IMMEDIATE AND DIRECT INTEREST TO BHUTTO WHO WORRIES THAT THE PROGRESS WE ARE BEGINNING TO MAKE IN OUR MILITARY SALES RELATIONSHIP AFTER A TEN YEAR HIATUS MAY WELL BE THREATENED BY WHAT HE SEES AS CONGRESSIONAL SHORTSIGHTEDNESS.

9. BHUTTO WONDERS IF CONGRESSIONAL ACTIONS ARE NOT FORCING AMERICA TO RETREAT FROM THE POSITION IT HAS HELD TO HIS OBVIOUS ADMIRATION AS LEADER OF THE DEMOCRATIC WORLD. THIS CONCERN IS HEIGHTENED BY HIS FEAR THAT DETENTE IN EUROPE MAY LEAD THE SOVIET UNION TO PAY GREATER ATTENTION TO EXPANDING ITS INFLUENCE IN SOUTH ASIA, TO THE DETRIMENT OF PAKISTAN. PUT BOLDLY, HE ASKS HIMSELF, AND HE MAY WELL ASK YOU, HOW RELIABLE AN ALLY AND FRIEND PAKISTAN CAN EXPECT AMERICA TO BE IN THE POST-VIETNAM, POST-WATERGATE WORLD.

10. BHUTTO WILL ALSO, OF COURSE, WANT TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT SPECIFIC INTERNATIONAL PROBLEM AREAS. HE WILL BE PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN YOUR THINKING ABOUT PROSPECTS IN THE MIDDLE EAST. HE FOLLOWS DEVELOPMENTS THERE CAREFULLY AND HAS GOOD CONTACTS WITH MANY ARAB LEADERS. I KNOW HE GREATLY ADMIRES WHAT YOU HAVE MANAGED TO ACCOMPLISH THERE, THOUGH HE HAS GRAVE DOUBTS ABOUT THE PROSPECTS FOR FURTHER PROGRESS AND WILL WELCOME (AND BE FLATTERED BY) ANYTHING YOU WILL WANT TO PASS ON TO HIM.

11. IT BEGINS TO APPEAR THAT THE MOST TROUBLESOME SPECIFIC YOU MAY ENCOUNTER WITH BHUTTO WILL BE IN NUCLEAR MATTERS. OUR VIEWS HAVE NOT BEEN ASKED ON THIS AND I HAVE NOT WEIGHED IN ON THE SERIES OF INFO COPIES WE ARE RECEIVING HERE ON RECENT DEVELOPMENTS AS THE EXPERTISE AVAILABLE TO YOU IN WASHINGTON IS OF COURSE
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FAR GREATER THAN OURS HERE. WHILE I PERSONALLY WANT TO SEE US DO ALL WE PROPERLY CAN TO KEEP PAKISTAN FROM GOING NUCLEAR, IT OCCURS TO ME THAT BHUTTO MAY WELL TAKE THE POSITION WE ARE ATTEMPTING TO DEAL WITH PAKISTAN ON THIS MATTER IN AN UNEQUITABLE MANNER AS COMPARED TO OTHERS. FROM WHAT I HAVE SEEN AND KNOW IT APPEARS TO ME THAT HE MAY INDEED HAVE A POINT.

12. ON THE BROADER ISSUES, I KNOW THAT BHUTTO HAS BEEN VERY MUCH LOOKING FORWARD TO SHARING HIS CONCERNS WITH YOU AND WILL EXPECT TO HAVE THE SAME FRANK EXCHANGES ABOUT THEM YOU AND HE HAVE SO OFTEN ENJOYED. YOU'LL HAVE AS ALWAYS AN INTELLIGENT AND SOPHISTICATED LISTENER WHO WILL ON HIS PART PRESENT HIS VIEWS WITH CUSTOMARY ELOQUENCE AND FORTHRIGHTNESS. I WISH I COULD BE THERE.
BYROADE

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